

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 9, as follows:

In order to continuously feed welding wire to the welding machine, it is known to use two containers, namely a first container which currently provides the welding wire, and a second container which is ~~[[being]]~~ used as soon as the wire from the first container has been entirely consumed. The end of the welding wire of the first container is joined to the beginning of the welding wire of the second container so that a continuous supply of the welding wire is ensured. After the first container is empty and the welding wire is being withdrawn from the second container, the first container is replaced by a new container, and the beginning of the welding wire of the new container is joined to the end of the welding wire from the container currently used.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 26, as follows:

WO 02/094493 shows a system with two containers in which a runner is arranged on the welding wire. The runner is a solid body and is intended to prevent kinks in the wire by means of its ~~weights~~ weight. However, this solution has proven to not work satisfactorily.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 1, as follows:

The spacing means can be overcome by either at least partially detaching the spacing means from the cover, by ~~destructing~~ destroying the spacing means or by deflecting the spacing means so as to allow the welding wire to escape through the slot.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 7, as follows:

In another embodiment, the spacing means ~~[[if]]~~ is formed from two narrow portions of the slot. These narrow portions hold the welding wire portions extending through the cover

spaced from each other while at the same time allowing the wire to pass through when switching from the currently used container to the subsequent container.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 19, as follows:

In the center of the upper surface 26, a truncated pyramid 30 is provided. Further, a slot 32 is provided in the upper surface 26. The slot 32 extends from adjacent an edge of the cover 24 towards and beyond the center of the upper surface 26. As can be seen in Figs. 3 and 4, the slot 32 extends over the left side surface and the upper surface of the truncated pyramid 30 and over almost the entire right side surface.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 3, as follows:

The spacing means 34, in ~~[[the]]~~ preferred embodiments, is formed from an adhesive strip or a plastic plate attached to the upper surface 26 of the cover 24 on one side of the slot 32 only. This attachment is schematically shown with reference numeral 40 in Figs. 3 and 4.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 18, as follows:

~~[[Figure 5]]~~ Fig. 5 shows a cover in which the spacing means is formed from two separate ~~adhesive~~ paper labels attached to the cover by an adhesive, shown in phantom at 60, spaced from each other. One of the labels holds the end portion 18 of the welding wire in the outer portion 38 of the slot 32, and a second label holds the wire portion currently withdrawn in the inner portion 36 of the slot. When the system is switching from the currently used container to the subsequently used container, the paper labels are ruptured so as to allow the welding wire to escape from the container through the slot.